



# U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

## Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations

### General Information

Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) lies in the glacial till plain of north-central Missouri in Chariton County, near the town of Sumner. It is located near the confluence of the Grand and Missouri Rivers, and is bordered on the south by Yellow Creek. The refuge was established by Executive Order #7563 on February 27, 1937. Purchase of 10,795 acres began at that time with money from the "N.I.R., Agriculture, and Wildlife Refuge Funds". Following purchase of the land, the Civilian Conservation Corps began work on the Refuge creating wetlands, constructing roads and buildings, and initiating the Refuge farming program.

The primary purpose for establishment of the Refuge was to provide nesting, resting and feeding areas for waterfowl, primarily ducks. To fulfill this purpose the Refuge manages approximately 4,800 acres of wetland habitats including open water, perennial emergent marsh, shrub swamp, and moist soil. The Refuge attracts an average of three million duck use days each year during the fall and spring migration periods.

### Waterfowl Hunting

Swan Lake NWR has 19 waterfowl hunting units. Most of these units are awarded through an online draw conducted every two weeks during the waterfowl hunting seasons via [www.swanlakepermits.com](http://www.swanlakepermits.com). Once the duck season has closed all of these units are open to Goose hunting during the late goose season through a self-registration system at the Hunters Headquarters each day.

### Regulations

The regulations below supplement the general regulations which govern hunting on National Wildlife Refuges as set forth in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations. Hunting is permitted in accordance with all applicable State and Federal regulations and is subject to special regulations. Hunters should consult the Missouri Department of Wildlife Conservation Waterfowl Hunting Regulations.

Once you have been drawn for a waterfowl hunt you should print off your parking permit and waterfowl hunting permits. Each hunter should sign their respective permit and keep that on their person for the hunt.

Check in at the Hunters Headquarters must be completed before going to your assigned hunting unit. The Hunting Headquarters will be staffed from 5 AM – 7 AM each day of hunting. Each hunter must check in with their party and show all required licenses and permits. Each hunter should obtain a Green Waterfowl Hunting Tag, complete and turn in the top portion while checking in. Upon leaving the hunt area for the day the bottom portion of the Green Waterfowl Hunting Tag must be accurately completed and turned in by each hunter at the drop box at the Hunters Headquarters or the Visitor Center.

The following permits are required while waterfowl hunting on Swan Lake NWR.

1. Parking Permit for Vehicle
2. Swan Lake NWR Migratory Bird Hunt Permit
3. Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp
4. Missouri Migratory Bird Hunting Permit
5. Missouri Permit to hunt Small Game
6. Green Waterfowl Hunting Tag (bottom portion on person with top portion turned in at check in station.)

- Hunters may only hunt on the designated day and hunting unit as identified on their permit.
- Hunters must shut and relock all gates, designated to be shut and locked.
- After you have signed in for your hunting unit, the route will be marked on the map to assist you in finding it. You may park only at your assigned parking lot. Enter and leave the area by your assigned routes only. Shooting hours are posted at the hunting headquarters.
- You may check in after 5 AM and enter your hunting unit after you have properly checked in. You must be out of your unit at the designated time for that unit.
- Do not drive off designated roads and parking lots to access blinds or your hunting unit or for any other purpose. ATV's/UTV's are prohibited. Hand pushed carts are allowed.
- Hunt from within assigned units or blinds only. Refilling or changing units is not permitted.
- You may not pursue and shoot cripples outside of your assigned unit. Do not cross into the refuge area or another hunter's unit.
- Possession or use of shotgun shells loaded with other than steel shot or an approved substitute is prohibited while hunting waterfowl. Shotguns should not be capable of holding more than 3 shells.
- Each hunter is only allowed 25 shells for each day of hunting.
- Each hunter must keep his or her birds (bag) separated from those of other hunters at all times.
- Transport only your own legal bag. It is illegal to transport a live or crippled migratory bird without the proper federal permit.
- No more than four people may hunt in an assigned hunting unit and must possess a valid Swan Lake NWR Migratory Bird Hunt Permit that is signed by the person named on the permit.
- No decoy rental is available at hunting headquarters.
- At the end of each days hunt, promptly pick up trash, spent shells, decoys, etc., drop off the lower portion of the Waterfowl Hunting Tag (Green Card) at hunting headquarters or refuge visitor center, and exit the area.
- All hunting dogs must be leashed except when retrieving downed game within your assigned hunting unit. Dogs must be under the control of their owner at all times.
- Units A7, R1, R4 are restricted to hunting from the designated blind only.
- The possession or use of alcoholic beverages on Swan Lake National Wildlife Refuge is prohibited.
- Units S1, S2, S3, S4, T1, T3, W1, & W2 have a 12 PM shooting closure and you must be out of the hunting area by 1:00 p.m. All hunters in these hunting units must be out of and have their supplies removed from the area by 1:00 p.m. Long cut boots and chest waders are highly recommended.
- When hunting in the walk in units which include S1, S2, S3, S4, T1, T3, W1, W2 N4, N2, A3, B4, E1, G2, H2, and J2; hunters may use layout blinds or temporary blinds and place them anywhere within the unit. The unit boundaries are identified with orange signs with the hunting unit number on them facing in towards the hunting unit. You may not shoot birds outside the boundary of your assigned unit nor go out of your unit to retrieve down birds or for any other purpose. You must be out of and have your supplies removed from these units by 1 hour after legal shooting time ends for the day.
- Vegetation may not be cut.

Please practice good sportsmanship and ethical behavior to ensure future hunting opportunities continue at Swan Lake NWR.

For further information, contact the refuge headquarters at 660/856-3323, Ext 13, if no answer leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible. You may also contact Refuge Manager Steve Whitson at (660) 973-6349 or Refuge Law Enforcement Officer Wes Verrill at (573) 999-1694.